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THE LITERATURE OF WITCHCRAFT IN NEW ENGLAND.

THE sporadic and epidemic manifestations of witchcraft during the seventeenth century in New England were but symptoms of a belief in satanic agencies, world-wide and pervading all ages. As a psychological symptom, it has created a large number of treatises, learned or emotional, some confidently adhering to the belief, others corrective or sternly critical. Lecky, who has touched the subject in his *History of Rationalism*, gives high praise to the learning and ability of Maury's *Histoire de la Magie* (Paris, 1860). The retrospections of the *Commentaries* of Blackstone, the records (1661) of the *Tryal of Witches at the Assizes for the County of Suffolk, March, 1664, before Sir Matthew Hale* (London, 1682), (which Cotton Mather summarized in his *Wonders of the Invisible World*), and T. Glanvil's *Sadducismus triumphans, or full and plain evidence concerning witches and apparitions* (London, 1681,)—a book on which the Mathers feasted—show how thoroughly perverse public opinion was in England in the days when colonial New England looked thither for guidance. The commonness of the frenzy is shown in such books as W. H. D. Adams's *Historical sketches of magic and witchcraft in England and Scotland* (London, 1889). Michael Dalton's *Country Justice* (1619, etc.,) was the authority for the English practice in such trials. Dr. Haven, in his Report to the American Antiquarian Society (April 24, 1874), says of Dalton's book: "The tests, the manner of examination, the nature of the evidence, the

processes of trial and the consequences of conviction, were laid down with a clearness that admitted of no evasion or misinterpretation in Dalton's *Justice*, the accepted legal guide of the provinces. . . . No one can read these directions and legal precedents . . . without being struck with the scrupulous exactness of their observance in the trials at Salem." This infelicitous propensity had not even then escaped censure, but Reginald Scot, when in 1584 he published his *Discovery of Witchcraft*, in order to prove that "the contracts and compacts of witches with devils and all infernal spirits or familiars, are but erroneous novelties and imaginary conceptions," found himself in danger for his temerity. He maintained his position, dependent on posterity, as exemplified in Hallam, for an appreciation of it. Scot's book, however, had reached a third edition (London, 1665—in Harvard College library,) thirty years before the baleful exhibitions at Salem; and a new edition was printed at London in 1886.

When the executions for witchcraft numbered thirty thousand in the British islands—and the number of the judicial murders was still greater in the continental countries—it is one of the curious hazards of history that the few score deaths for witchcraft in New England should have made so extravagant an impression. After 1646 there were but twelve executed for witch-pact, till the fever of 1692 added twenty more, making only thirty-two in that century, and none before or since. (*Cf. Historical Magazine*, April, 1860; *New England Magazine*, Dec., 1893,—cited for ease of reference, for the facts are notorious). Hutchinson accounts for this prominence of the Salem story in this way: "The great noise, which the New England witchcrafts made throughout the English dominions, proceeded more from the general panic with which all sorts of persons were seized, and an expectation that the contagion would spread to all parts of the country, than from the number of persons who were executed, more

having been put to death in a single county in England, in a short space of time, than have suffered in all New England from the first settlement to the present time." How the story, as told in a score of publications, in which for the most part "the devil was an easy way of accounting for what was beyond man's comprehension," affects the modern scholar, can be seen in the essay on witchcraft, contributed by James Russell Lowell to the *North American Review*, Jan., 1868, and included in his *Among my Books* (Boston, 1870); and we may well remember his conclusions: "The proceedings at Salem are sometimes spoken of as if they were exceptionally cruel. But in fact, if compared with others of the same kind, they were exceptionally humane. . . . While in other countries the delusion was extinguished by the incredulity of the upper classes and the interference of authority, here the reaction took place among the people themselves, and here only was an attempt made at some legislative restitution, however inadequate." It should be remembered that the common law penalty for such felony was burning, and there was not a case of that torture in Salem. Giles Corey, who was pressed to death, suffered the common law penalty for refusing to plead.

The student will naturally not forget as a general treatise Sir Walter Scott's *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft*.

A convenient enumeration of the phenomena is Samuel G. Drake's *Annals of Witchcraft in New England and elsewhere in the United States from their first settlement* (Boston, 1869), being No. 8 of W. E. Woodward's "Historical Series." Mr. Drake only summarizes the Salem events, but enlarges on the less known instances, from 1636 to 1728, and gives in an appendix the examination of Hugh Parsons at Springfield in 1651, and the testimony in the case of Elizabeth Moore at Newbury in 1680.

Without any attempt to be exhaustive on these sporadic cases anterior to 1692, reference may be made, in passing,

for cases in New England to Palfrey's *New England*, vol. iv.; to William F. Poole's chapter in vol. ii. of Winsor's *Memorial History of Boston;* S. G. Drake's *Boston;* Holland's *History of Western Massachusetts;* Sylvester Judd's *Hadley*, ch. 21; and Bailey's *Andover*. The case of Elizabeth Knap in Groton can be followed in Samuel Willard's *Useful instructions for a professing people* (Cambridge, 1673), Mather's *Magnalia*, Butler's *Groton*, Samuel A. Green's *Groton in the Witchcraft Times* (1883), and Willard's diary in the *Massachusetts Historical Collections*, vol. xxxviii. For Plymouth Colony, see W. R. Bliss's *Old Colony Town* (Boston, 1893). For a case in New Hampshire, 1656, see the *N. E. Hist. and Geneal. Register*, 1889, p. 181, and *Granite Monthly*, vol. x., p. 347; for one in Maine, 1659, see *Ditto*, 1859, July, p. 193; for Connecticut cases see *The Colonial Records* of that Colony; for those in New York, see O'Callaghan's *Documentary Hist. of New York*, iv., p. 85; for "Isaac Sherwood, the one Virginia witch," see *Harper's Magazine*, June, 1884; for indictments in North Carolina, see Hawks's *History* of that State, ii., 116; for others in South Carolina, see *De Bow's Review*.

There is a report of a case in Illinois so late as 1790 (*Magazine of American History*, Nov., 1885, p. 458).

"There were executions for this cause in England," says Dr. Haven, "as late as 1716, and in Scotland as late as 1722. The laws against witchcraft remained on the statute book till the 9th of George II., when they were repealed."

The tendency of the seventeenth century to cling to a belief in witchcraft was encouraged by the books which the New England communities read. Hutchinson speaks thus of this influence: "Not many years before, Glanvil published his witch-stories in England; Perkins and other nonconformists were earlier; but the great authority was that of Sir Matthew Hale, revered in New England, not only

for his knowledge in the law, but for his gravity and piety. The trial of the witches in Suffolk was published in 1684 [1682?]. All these books were in New England, and the conformity between the behavior of the supposed bewitched at Salem and the behavior of those in England, is so exact, as to leave no room to doubt the stories had been read by the New England persons themselves, or had been told to them by others, who had read them." Among books of this pernicious tendency, none were read with more avidity than those of Increase and Cotton Mather, and to the baleful influence of such was largely due the unbalance of mind, which permitted the Salem frenzy. The systematic efforts of the Mathers, father and son, to engage the superstitious and reckless—and in this nefarious business Increase at a later day used his position as President of Harvard College, the better to accomplish his ends—led to many ministers and others helping, by offering a premium on invention and exaggeration, to pour in upon the expectant credulous, what Mather was pleased to call "memorable or illustrious providences." It is no merely modern propensity, prompted by a disregard of the tendency of that time, to charge so much upon this baleful misuse of literature, for these books were recognized even in the Mathers' day as an active agency, leading to direful events. It is so shown in Francis Hutchinson's *Historical Essay concerning Witchcraft* (London, 1718), which was reprinted with enlargements in 1720, and in Richard Baxter's preface to his edition of Cotton Mather's *Memorable Providences*. The first of the two Mather books, responsible for so much, was Increase Mather's *An Essay for recording of Illustrious Providences: wherein an account is given of many remarkable and very memorable events which have happened this last age, especially in New England* (Boston, 1684).

Hutchinson refers to this book when he says: "A very circumstantial account of all or most of the cases was published, and many arguments were brought to convince the

country, that they were no delusions or impostures; but the effects of a familiarity between the devil and such as he found fit for his instruments."

Mr. J. A. Doyle says of it, in his *Puritan Colonies* (ii., 389): "The conditions of life in New England made such a publication peculiarly dangerous. The human imagination, starved by asceticism, robbed of all natural and wholesome aliment, revenged itself by seizing greedily on the marvels presented to it." There are copies of Mather's book in the American Antiquarian Society, Massachusetts Historical Society, and Prince libraries. It has been reprinted in our day as *Remarkable Providences, illustrative of the earlier days of American Colonization . . . with introductory preface by George Offor* (London, 1856).

Five years later Cotton Mather published *Memorable Providences, relating to witchcrafts and possessions. A faithful account of many wonderful and surprising things, that have befallen several bewitched and possessed persons in New England* (Boston, 1689,—a copy in the Prince library). It was reprinted at Edinburgh. In the London reprint of 1691, the title is changed to *Late Memorable Providences*, etc., *clearly manifesting not only that there are witches, but that good men (as well as others) may possibly have their lives shortened by such evil instruments of Satan.* There are copies of this edition in the Prince and Harvard College libraries. The book is in some part concerned with the case of Goody Glover, the last witch executed in Boston (1688). "I am resolved," says this gentle Christian divine, "after this never to use but just one grain of patience with any man, that shall go to impose upon me a denial of devils or of witches." Richard Baxter, who published in London, in 1691, his *Certainty of the world of Spirits*, says: "They that will read Mr. Increase Mather's book, and especially his son's, Mr. Cotton Mather's book, of witchcrafts in New England, may

see enough to silence any incredulity that pretendeth to be rational."

"The writings of the two Mathers had prepared the public," says Doyle, "both to be interested and to believe." The effects of the morbid condition of mind, which these noisome records produced, augmented by sundry English books of equally pernicious character, manifested itself, as the world knows, in the beginning of 1692, at Salem Village, a precinct of Salem, in the family of the Rev. Samuel Parris, who has been held immediately responsible for the initial movements of the persecutions. As much as can be said in exculpation of his folly is told in Samuel P. Fowler's brief *Account of the life and character of Rev. Samuel Parris* (Salem, 1857), which is reprinted in Drake's *Witchcraft Delusion in New England* (vol. iii.). Some of Parris's sermons, which are preserved in the Connecticut Historical Society Library, tell the story of his credulity. (*N. E. Hist. and Geneal. Register*, April, 1858; *Historical Magazine*, ii., 49).

Sir William Phips, the fortuitous royal governor of the Province, owing his elevation to Increase Mather, and yielding to influence of the same sort, established a special Court of Oyer and Terminer in June for the trial of the accused. There is a letter from Cotton Mather to John Richards, one of the court, excusing himself for not attending the trials; but advising on the course of procedure (*Mass. Hist. Collections*, xxxviii., 391), and when after one execution the ministers were called upon for advice on this point, their *Return*, urging a rigorous and speedy prosecution, was written by Cotton Mather. The paper can be found in the *Mather Papers*, as published by the Mass. Hist. Society; in Hutchinson's account; in Upham's *Salem Witchcraft;* and Increase Mather gave it in his *Cases of Conscience*. In interpreting this paper, Upham and most of the commentators consider it as sustaining the use of "spectral evidence," or the testimony of the

accusers; but Poole, in controverting Upham, denies the deduction. (*Cf.* Bowen's *Life of Phips*).

The earliest publication, a tract of ten pages, bearing directly upon the events at Salem Village, was issued in the summer of 1692, as *A brief and true narrative of some remarkable passages relating to sundry persons, afflicted by witchcraft at Salem Village, which happened from the nineteenth of March to the fifth of April, 1692. Collected by Deodat Lawson* (Boston, 1692). Dr. Moore infers that the publication was instigated by Cotton Mather. There is a copy in the Mass. Hist. Society library.

The wretched summer passed, and autumn was passing, and twenty executions had taken place, when in October the court adjourned, and was not suffered to reassemble. (C. W. Upham's *Salem Witchcraft and Cotton Mather*, Phips's letter to Nottingham, *Essex Institute Hist. Collections*, vol. ix., and in Palfrey's *New England*, iv., 112).

More than a month before this Cotton Mather, Sept. 20, had importuned Stephen Sewall, the clerk of the court, to furnish him accounts of the trials. (*New Eng. Hist. and Geneal. Register*, 1870, p. 108). In this way securing the records of five of the examinations, and having a purpose, as he professed, "to countermine the whole plot of the Devil against New England," he embodied them in his *Wonders of the Invisible World* (Boston, 1693), a volume of 215 pages. He had already preached some portion of the book in a sermon, on Aug. 4, 1692. While he was at work on his manuscript it is to be allowed that the time was "in the highest ferment of these troubles," as with smothered qualms of conscience he later claimed, professing at the same time that he rejoiced "for justice being so far executed." The book was apparently finished in October, when a duplicate copy of the manuscript was sent to England, so that the book's appearance in London was not far from the issue of the Boston edition, both being given to the public probably in December, 1692. The imprints of

the New England edition vary, so that there were at least two names of publishers, and a Catalogue of the library of the American Antiquarian Society (1837) gives the date of 1692 for one in that society, repeated by Henry M. Dexter in his *Bibliography of Congregationalism;* but an inspection of the copy shows that the date is 1693, like that chronicled by Dr. Green as being in the library of the Massachusetts Historical Society. There were three London editions issued by John Dunton, the third, much abridged, filling only 64 pages. The second and third editions were advertised in February and June, 1693. Copies have risen in value from 10/6 in Rich's day, 1844, to over a hundred dollars in recent sales. All three London editions are in Harvard College library. There are three modern reprints. One was issued by J. R. Smith in his Library of Old Authors, *to which is added a farther account of the Tryals of the New England Witches by Increase Mather* (London, 1862); a second in S. G. Drake's *Witchcraft Delusion in New England* (Roxbury, 1866); and the third in S. P. Fowler's *Salem Witchcraft* (Salem, 1861; Boston, 1865).

Early in the year (1693) the London press also gave out *A true account of the Tryals . . . of divers witches at Salem, in New England. . . . In a letter to a friend in London.* This production is dated at "Salem, 8th moneth, 1692," and signed "M. C.", and Sibley credits it to Cotton Mather; but Dr. Moore considers it a made-up affair, and cribbed from *The Wonders of the Invisible World.* There is a copy in the Carter-Brown library.

Increase Mather had landed at Boston, May 14, 1692, returning from a mission, which had secured the provincial charter for Massachusetts, and Sir William Phips, Mather's creature, for the governor under it. Both came to find the country in the midst of the excitement, which Mather's craving for "illustrious providences" had done so much to produce. Phips could hardly have instituted the

court for trying the witches, but with Mather's approval, and the turmoil in men's minds, was further augmented by Mather's preparation of what he called *Cases of conscience concerning evil spirits personating men, witchcrafts, infallible proofs of guilt in such as are accused with that crime.* (Boston, 1693). This paper, in which he tardily disapproved the admission of "spectral evidences," and which was in some respects an enlargement of the "Return" of the ministers, was dated at Boston, Oct. 3, 1692, and there are copies in the Harvard College, Massachusetts Historical Society, Prince, and American Antiquarian Society libraries. The original manuscript, or what purported to be it, was offered in the Francis S. Drake sale in Boston, in November, 1885, No. 1032.

As his son had done, Mather despatched apparently an early copy, either of proof or manuscript, to England, and John Dunton announced in June, 1693, in the *Athenian Mercury*, that the book was in press. (Moore's *Bibliographical Notes.*) When it appeared it made part of a volume entitled *A farther account of the Tryals of the New England Witches, with the observations of a person who was upon the place several days when the suspected witches were first taken into examination. To which is added Cases of Conscience*, etc. (London, 1693.) There are copies in the American Antiquarian Society, Boston Athenæum, and Harvard College libraries. The "person" referred to was Deodat Lawson, whose *True Narrative*, already mentioned in the earliest publication on the subject, introduced the volume. The *Farther Account*, etc., was reprinted in 1862, at London, in the volume with Cotton Mather's *Wonders, etc.*

Lawson's account was also made a part of his *Christ's fidelity the only shield against Satan's malignity. Sermon at Salem Village, 24 March, 1692*, as "a brief account of those amazing things which occasioned that discourse." (Boston, 1693; London, 1704.)

Samuel Sewall records that Cotton Mather said of the four condemned persons, who were hanged August 19, "that they all died by a righteous sentence." Inasmuch as conviction depended on "spectral evidence," we have in this assertion Mather's approval of its fitness in deciding the question of guilt, and so far it sustains Upham against Poole in their later controversy.

After the reaction came, Cotton Mather avoided publishing any direct explanation of his conduct during the turmoil. He contented himself with objurgations upon his antagonist, Calef, and was satisfied with praying and singing psalms, as his diary shows. He came nearest to making a record in his *Life of Sir William Phips* (London, 1697; again 1699; and also in his *Magnalia*). The sixteenth section of the latter is "A remarkable history of the strange witchcrafts and possessions in New England." When he issued his *Magnalia* in 1702, he used a narrative prepared by John Hales, instead of writing one himself.

The chief dependence in considering the events of Cotton Mather's life, has been a memoir of him by his son Samuel, and the extracts from his diaries (preserved in the libraries of the American Antiquarian Society, the Massachusetts Historical Society and in the Congregational library in Boston) which have been printed. His agency in these Salem events has been variously viewed, generally with aversion, tempered sometimes with charity, and sometimes with attempted exoneration. He may not have been wilfully culpable, though he has to some the guise of it; but unintentioned mischief loses little of its burden and pestilence. We find the diverse estimates vigorously upheld in the controversy between Upham and Poole; and every shade of condemnation or apology will appear in the following books: Peabody's *Life of Cotton Mather* in Sparks's "American Biography"; Chandler Robbins's *History of the Second Church in Boston;* the *History of New England* by Palfrey, of *Massachusetts* by Barry

and of *Harvard University* by Quincy; Haven in the American Antiquarian Society *Proceedings*, April and October, 1874, seeks to modify modern judgments; Henry M. Dexter in the *Memorial History of Boston* defends the "Mather Dynasty"; Sibley's *Harvard Graduates* meets the issue squarely. Abijah P. Marvin in his *Cotton Mather and His Times* (Boston, 1894,) labors as an apologist, and Barrett Wendell in his *Cotton Mather* (New York, 1893,) recognizes the influence which the modern study of hypnotism has upon the treatment of a belief in witchcraft. This is perhaps more apparent in a paper read by Wendell before the Essex Institute called "*Were the Salem Witches Guiltless?*" (Salem, 1892,) later included in his *Stelligeri and other essays* (New York, 1893.) W. F. Poole intimates this ground of defence in his *North American Review* article, and G. M. Beard employs it in his *Psychology of the Salem Witchcraft Excitement of 1692, and its practical application to our own time.* (New York, 1882.)

It is always a misfortune to a man to be too conscious of his dominance among his fellows. A docile spirit finds its circumspection, not only keen, but humble, and such are the only leaders of men whom other ages can applaud. When men like the Mathers with hierarchical power assume infallible leadership, they put themselves beyond the pale of later sympathy, and when such men fall into a frenzy that bodes evil, they should be held to a strict accountability at the bar of history. It is due to humanity and its hopes of improvement, that no forced exoneration shall protect their reputation with posterity.

The assumption of the Mathers was a serious responsibility. Their followers may be pardoned by a more enlightened age; but themselves, never. Such men cannot avoid coming in contact with those who act under impulses which all ages share. Their fame cannot always encounter the debased conditions which characterized their own times.

It was dangerous in those days for a man to show unguardedly this perennial judgment, but that there lived at the time of the Mathers some who were not enslaved by their influence, shows that society could have been saved, but for such misguided leaders. Such was Joshua Moody, who spirited away to a place of safety the accused Philip English and his wife (Sibley's *Harvard Graduates*, i. 377). Such was the outspoken Robert Pike (John S. Pike, *Life of Robert Pike, the New Puritan*). The Reverend John Wise was "perhaps the only minister in the neighborhood or country, who was discerning enough to see the erroneousness of the proceedings from the beginning." (Upham's *Salem Witchcraft.*) Samuel Willard of Boston had three of the judges, among his friends and parishioners, Winthrop, Stoughton and Sewall, and was privileged to read the latter's words of repentance from his pulpit, Jan. 14, 1696-7. He thought his environment rendered it wiser for him to send to Philadelphia, and have printed there anonymously before the revulsion came, a dialogue, tending to set the current right, which he had written during the summer, and called *Some Miscellany Observations on our present debates respecting Witchcraft* (Philadelphia, 1692.) There is a copy of this tract in the Massachusetts Historical Society's library. It was in time known to be Willard's production, and Dr. Moore has pointed out correspondences of sentiment in an acknowledged sermon of 1706. It is placed among his writings in a list of them given in his *Body of Divinity* (1726) and his biographer, Ebenezer Pemberton, makes it evidence of his right-mindedness. It was reprinted in *The Congregational Quarterly*, July, 1869, and separately.

Early in October, 1692, and while the fever was still running, Thomas Brattle wrote a *Letter giving a full and candid account of the delusion called witchcraft, which prevailed in New England, and of the judicial trials and executions at Salem for that pretended crime, in 1692*,—a

paper which Savage calls "the most judicious explanation of the processes of that judicial blindness." It was not printed till 1798, in the *Massachusetts Historical Collections*, vol. v. "Brattle thoroughly understood the people to whom he was writing" says Doyle. "A man could hardly have gone as far as he did, and have thoroughly understood the weakness of the evidence on which the charges rested, without going further and seeing that the whole theory of possession and compact was groundless."

Brattle rendered more conspicuous service in the assistance which he gave to Robert Calef, the sturdiest antagonist of the folly, after the tide had turned. This gentleman, calling himself a merchant of Boston, had come in contact with Cotton Mather, when, following upon the subsidence of the Salem frenzy, this unsated divine was working up the case of Margaret Rule in Boston, in *Another Brand Plucked Out of the Burning*. Calef got hold of a copy of it which was circulated in manuscript, and somewhat persistently tried to bring Mather to acknowledge what he meant in the further pursuit; Mather at first tried to browbeat his teaser with threatening a suit at law for slander. He then put on a wary habit, which is cleverly shown by Sibley's summary of their intercourse in his *Harvard Graduates* (vol. iii.) There is approval of Mather's studied disdain in Poole's review of Upham, and in Marvin's *Cotton Mather and His Times*. "To question the infallibility of Cotton Mather," says Doyle, "and still to remain on good terms with him was impossible. Calef was soon engaged in a controversy, conducted by him with sobriety and good judgment and by his opponent with confusion of thought and intemperance of language."

There were two Robert Calefs at this time in Boston, father and son, born respectively in 1648 and 1677, and there has been some doubt as to which of the name was Mather's critic. The letters which Calef addressed to Mather, together with Mather's account of the Margaret

Rule case, and with reports of some of the Salem cases, beside a comment on Mather's Memoir of Phips, were sent to England and were there printed in 1700, as *More Wonders of the Invisible World*. The book is sufficiently rare to be worth in either of the two editions of that year from $100 to $150. It is, however, in the Harvard College, Massachusetts Historical Society, Carter-Brown and other leading collections, and was sold in the Barlow, Menzies, Murphy and Ives sales.

Calef's book was reprinted at Salem in 1796 and 1823, and at Boston in 1828,—all more or less erroneously, the later ones based on the 1796 edition, which was carelessly proof-read. In 1861, at Salem, and in 1865, at Boston, Mr. S. P. Fowler published *Salem Witchcraft, comprising more wonders of the Invisible World by Robert Calef, and Wonders of the Invisible World by Cotton Mather, with notes and explanations.* Charles Deane pointed out in a review the unsatisfactory character of this text of the two books, which showed reduplications of errors, and in the case of Mather's book, that it was reprinted from an abridged edition. This critique was separately printed as *Bibliographical Tracts, No. 1. Spurious Reprints of Early books, by C. D.* (Boston, 1865). A better text of the two books was given in *The Witchcraft Delusion of New England . . . as exhibited by Dr. Cotton Mather, etc., with preface, introduction and notes, by Samuel G. Drake* (Roxbury, 1866, in three volumes.)

Hutchinson says of Calef that "in his account of facts, which can be evidenced by records and other original writings, he appears to have been a fair relator." To vindicate Mather it has been necessary to discredit Calef, and the opinion of him held by Poole and Marvin is a derogatory one. On the other hand most students of the question since Hutchinson, and down to Upham and Moore, have upheld Calef and sacrificed Mather. *Cf.* Moses Coit Tyler in his *American Literature.*

The opinion of his opponent held by Mather himself was couched in the language of aspersions, as will be seen in the extracts from his diary given in the *Mass. Hist. Society Proceedings*, March, 1858. Increase Mather is said to have burned the book in the yard of Harvard College. Some of the supporters of Mather, Obadiah Gill and others, published a tract, *Some Few Remarks Upon a Scandalous Book Against the Government and Ministry of New England, written by one Robert Calef.* The signers said they belonged "to the flock of some of the injured pastors, and [were] concerned for their just vindication." This tract has never been reprinted; but there are copies in the Harvard College, Boston Public and Massachusetts Historical Society libraries.

The revulsion at last came when persons in high station were whispered against and when the wife of the Rev. John Hale, of Beverly, was accused. The husband, who had been one of the urgent abettors of the persecutions, turned in his tracks when the storm swept against his own household. "The whole community," says Upham, "became convinced that the accusers in crying out upon Mrs. Hale, had perjured themselves, and from that moment their power was destroyed." This was in October, 1692. Hale to explain his revulsion, prepared his *Modest Enquiry into the nature of witchcraft*, and in a preface dated Dec. 15, 1697, he makes the acknowledgment of his error, but "with too much pride," as Bentley said, "for a man who had done so much harm." It was not published till 1702, and there is a copy in Harvard College library and two were sold in the Brinley sale (Nos. 1365, 1366). It is probably the rarest of all the witchcraft books, and was reprinted in Boston in 1771. Cotton Mather in his *Parentator* (Boston, 1724), a memoir of his father, claimed, with what seemed very much like solemn mockery, that Increase Mather's *Cases of Conscience* gave the turn to the tide.

It was not till December 17, 1696, that the Council and the House of Representatives were brought to an agreement about issuing a proclamation for a day of humiliation. The House a week before had adopted a paper which had been drawn up by Cotton Mather, detailing reasons for a fast. It is given in W. D. Love's *Fast and Thanksgiving days of New England* (Boston, 1895), and it thus referred to the witchcraft trials: "Wicked sorceries have been practised in the land, and in the late inexplicable storms from the invisible world thereby brought upon us, we were left by the just hand of heaven unto those errors, whereby great hardships were brought upon innocent persons, and, we fear, guilt incurred which we have all cause to bewail with much confusion of our face before the Lord." The Council substituted another form of repentance, better suited to save their consciences, and the House assenting, the Fast was fixed for January 14, 1696–97. It was on this day that Judge Sewall made his public recantation in church (Sewall's *Diary*, i., 445).

There is a mass of official papers relating to the proceedings at Salem preserved in the office of the county clerk there. They have been printed in two volumes, not very accurately, in *Records of Salem Witchcraft, copied from the original documents* (Roxbury, 1864). The edition was small, not much over two hundred copies.

There is also in the archives of Massachusetts a volume of witchcraft papers, 1656–1750, containing many personal appeals of the accused, and they may be supplemented by matter found in the *Colonial Records* (Boston, 1853–4,) and in the *Province Laws* (Boston, 1869,) as edited for the most part by A. C. Goodell, Jr.

The records of the church at Danvers (once Salem Village) are printed in the *N. E. Hist. and Genealogical Register*, April and October, 1857, and in the *Mass. Historical Collections*, vol. xxiii.

Some papers passing from John Pickering to Dr. Nathaniel Bowditch were presented by Nathaniel I. Bowditch to the Massachusetts Historical Society, and are described in the *Proceedings*, May, 1860, and some relating to the case of George Burroughs are there printed. (*Cf.* Sibley's *Harvard Graduates*, ii., 334.) There are other papers, anterior to 1689, belonging to the Mather papers, calendared in the *Catalogue of the Prince Library* (Boston, 1870,) and printed in the *Mass. Historical Collections*, vol. xxxviii. Other manuscripts are in the library of the Essex Institute at Salem, and the printed *Collections* of that society contain various contemporary records of the trials, *etc.*,—those of Philip English, George Jacobs and Ann Pudeator, in vols. ii., iii. and iv. The indictment of Mary Osgood is in the Trumbull papers, in *Mass. Hist. Coll.*, vol. xlix., p. 174; and her examination, confession and recantation are given by Hutchinson. Cotton Mather's record of the case of Mercy Short, which he called *A Brand Plucked Out of the Burning*, is in the library of the American Antiquarian Society (*Proceedings*, April 29, 1874), and has not been printed. The personal assiduity of George Herrick in the persecutions is traced by S. P. Fowler in the *Historical Magazine*, vol. ii., p. 11.

The examination of Giles Corey was given by Pulsifer in 1823, in the Salem edition of Calef, and in Drake's appendix to his *Witchcraft Delusion*. Giles's will, made in view of his trial, July 25, 1692, is in the *N. E. Hist. and Geneal. Register*, 1856, p. 32. Corey and his fate (pressing to death) is the subject of a tragedy by Longfellow, and Miss Mary E. Wilkins has taken the same subject for a drama.

Some of the deficiencies in the records of the Court at Salem are supplied by the reports of the trials, which are given by Thomas Hutchinson in his *History of Massachusetts Bay*, vol. ii. (1767), and the documents which he prints were probably taken from the Court files, and are

no longer known to exist. He speaks of these papers as "original examinations" that had fallen into his hands. These give his narrative the value of an original source. Mr. William F. Poole in 1870 found among the Hutchinson papers in the State Archives what proved to be an early draft of Hutchinson's account, which as printed by the writer was abridged. This ampler text was communicated by Mr. Poole to the *N. E. Hist. and Geneal. Register*, October, 1870, and was printed separately as *The Witchcraft Delusion of 1692, from an unpublished manuscript (an early draft of his History of Massachusetts) in the Massachusetts Archives, with notes by William F. Poole* (Boston,1870, pp. 43). The annotations are useful to the student.

Hutchinson, who wrote seventy years after the events, gave the first really judicial examination of the problem, and his conclusions were summed up thus: "A little attention must force conviction that the whole was a scene of fraud and imposture, begun by young girls, who at first perhaps thought of nothing more than being pitied and indulged, and continued by adult persons, who were afraid of being accused themselves. The one and the other, rather than confess their fraud, suffered the lives of so many innocents to be taken away, through the credulity of judges and juries." This judgment will probably be accepted to-day except by those who see more in hypnotism than is yet proved.

Within the last thirty years there have been some sharp controversies over various aspects of the manifestations at Salem, in which Charles W. Upham, William F. Poole, Peleg W. Chandler, George H. Moore and Abner C. Goodell, Jr., have been the chief contestants.

In 1867, Mr. Upham of Salem, who had published some popular *Lectures on Salem Witchcraft* in 1831 and again in 1832, returned to the subject and made public what is still

the most elaborate account of the troubles, in his *Salem Witchcraft, with an account of Salem Village and a history of opinion on witchcraft and kindred subjects* (Boston, 1867, in two volumes). His narrative is summarized in C. E. Upham's *Salem Witchcraft in outline* (Salem, 1891). It was contended in the larger work of 1867, that Cotton Mather was largely responsible for creating an active agency of persecution by fostering a morbid condition in the public mind, and for instigating and promoting the work of the Court; and that his professed rejection of spectral evidence was nullified by his positive rejoicings at conviction, under such evidence. On these points Upham was controverted by William F. Poole in a review of the book in the *North American Review*, April, 1869, which was reprinted separately as *Cotton Mather and Salem Witchcraft* (Boston, 1869), in which Mather was defended from those charges and Calef held up to scorn. Upham replied in a longer paper, *Salem Witchcraft and Cotton Mather*, originally printed in the *Historical Magazine*, Sept., 1869, and appearing also separately. He reënforced the position taken in his book, showed how contemporary opinion held Mather responsible for a large part of the instigation, examined in this light the publications of both the Mathers and printed from the *Transactions* of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, 1831, vol. ii., 313, a letter written "17th, 6 m., 1692," to John Foster, in which Cotton Mather adhered to a belief in the propriety of employing spectral evidence. Upham also supported the validity of Robert Calef's protestations.

Abner C. Goodell, Jr., commended this reply in the *New Eng. Hist. and Geneal. Register*, 1870, and Dr. George E. Ellis, in a memoir of Mr. Upham (*Massachusetts Historical Proceedings*, Dec. 1876), says, "Mr. Upham was too thorough in his researches and too just and candid in his judgments to misread, pervert or color his material." Mr. Poole made no extensive rejoinder, but reprinted

from the newspapers two brief papers in response on *Cotton Mather and Witchcraft* (Boston, 1870); and made a useful survey of the literature of the subject later in the *Memorial History of Boston* (Boston, 1881), vol. ii.

At a meeting of the American Antiquarian Society, Oct., 1882, George H. Moore of the Lenox Library, read a paper, which appeared in the Society's *Proceedings*, and later separately as *Notes on the History of Witchcraft in Massachusetts, with illustrative documents* (Worcester, 1883). In this paper Dr. Moore took exception to some accepted propositions:

First,—He objected to Hutchinson's statement that there was no capital law in Massachusetts against witchcraft,—a statement copied by George Chalmers in his *Political Annals*,—and he discussed the relations of the common law and then existing statutes.

Second,—He denied that there was no lawyer employed in the proceeding, claiming that professional standing for Thomas Newton, the prosecuting attorney.

Third,—He denied that the bill drafted twenty years later and reversing the attainders of those convicted ever became a law.

Fourth,—He averred that no adequate recompense to those who suffered, or to their representatives, was ever made by the legislature.

In June, 1883, Abner C. Goodell, Jr., contributed to the *Mass. Hist. Society Proceedings*, vol. xx., a paper, published also separately as *Further Notes on the History of Witchcraft in Massachusetts, containing additional evidence of the passage of the act of 1711, for reversing the attainders of the witches; also affirming the legality of the special court of Oyer and Terminer of 1692* (Cambridge, 1884). In this Mr. Goodell answered Dr. Moore in the earlier part of the tract, and aroused another antagonist in the latter part. He accepted Dr. Moore's first and second

propositions, but demurred to his third and fourth. He produced a facsimile of the bill of 1711 and contended that it became a law. He showed that the General Court appropriated £578.12.0 to the sufferers or their representatives, as a "fair equivalent," and that it was accepted as such.

Emory Washburn in his *Judicial History of Massachusetts* (Boston, 1840,) and Peleg W. Chandler in his *American Criminal Trials* (Boston, 1841, vol. i.) had said that the court for trying the witches had been illegally instituted by Phips—the power to set it up resting with the General Court. It was to this position that Goodell took exception in the close of his paper in June. At the meeting in September, a letter from Mr. Chandler defending his counter views was read, and replied to by Goodell. At the December meeting, Chandler communicated another letter and in February, 1884, Goodell made a new rejoinder.

In March, 1884, Dr. Moore contributed to the Historical Society's *Proceedings*, another paper, which was also printed separately as *Supplementary Notes on Witchcraft in Massachusetts: a critical examination of the alleged law of 1711, for reversing the attainders of the witches of 1692* (Cambridge, 1884). At the same meeting Mr. Goodell replied, giving *Reasons for concluding that the Act of 1711 became a law.*

The contest closed with a paper by Dr. Moore, *Final Notes on Witchcraft in Massachusetts: a summary vindication of the laws and liberties concerning attainders with corruption of blood, escheats, forfeitures for crime and pardon of offenders, in reply to the Reasons*, etc. (New York, 1885). In this he again denied the validity of the alleged law of 1711, and in an appendix sided with Chandler against Goodell, in the controversy over the legality of the Court. This latter argument he had read to the New York Historical Society in March, 1885.

Dr. Moore's last communication upon the Salem events

was not controversial, but was an examination of the order of appearance of the contemporary books and tracts upon the Delusion. It appeared in the *Proceedings* of the American Antiquarian Society, April, 1888, and was printed separately as *Bibliographical Notes on Witchcraft in Massachusetts* (Worcester, 1888).

There remains, for the full comprehension of the literature of New England witchcraft, to mention some of the more general accounts of the events. About sixty or seventy years ago, there grew up a renewed interest in the phenomena, and there were three publications at the time which excited some attention. The *Lectures on Salem Witchcraft*, by C. W. Upham (already mentioned); James Thacher's *Essay on Demonology*, with an account of the witchcraft delusion (Boston, 1831); and Abel Cushing's *Historical letters on the first charter of Massachusetts government* (Boston, 1839), which was largely concerned with the trouble. The accounts in Hildreth's *United States* (vol. ii.), Barry's *Massachusetts* (vol. ii.), and Palfrey's *New England*, are all safe in their deductions; but neither these writers nor that of the chapter in vol. ii. of Gay's *Popular History of the United States*, have much patience with Cotton Mather. The best of the English accounts is that of J. A. Doyle in his *Puritan Colonies*, where he gives some sensible conclusions on the origin and sustenance of the delusion. There are essays on the subject in "Curiosities of Puritan History—Witchcraft," in *Putnam's Magazine*, September, 1853 (vol. ii., 249), and a recent one in Henry Ferguson's *Essays in American History* (N. Y., 1894). Some local memorabilia by Winfield S. Nevins will be found in the *New England Magazine* (vol. v.), December, 1891, p. 517, and January, 1892, pp. 665, 716. I know no extensive bibliography of the subject. Some of the essential titles are given in a separate section of the *Brinley Catalogue*.